

Monster by Walter Dean Myers Study Guide

Directions: Fill out the following questions with the class as you read the book, *Monster*. If you are absent get the answers from someone that was present while you were gone. During silent reading time, answers the question the best you can and then add to your answers during discussion. Answer all opinion questions thoroughly yourself.

PAGES 1-44

1. Why is it best to cry at night?
2. Where is our narrator when we first meet him?
3. What does the journal say this movie is about? Why?
4. What did the prosecutor call the main character? Why do you think so?
5. What kinds of voices are heard? Why do you think?
6. Describe the main character.
7. Fill out this chart.

Name	Role	What it means
Petrocelli		
O'Brien		
Briggs		
King		
Bobo Evans		
Oswaldo Cruz		
Lorelle Henry		

8. Why do you think the author describes the regular lives on p.11?
9. According to Ms. O'Brien, why should Steve take this trial "very, very seriously"? (p.12)
10. Why is it alright for Steve to acknowledge his mom in court but not his friends?
11. What are the charges against Steve and King?
12. What does felony murder mean?
13. What are O'Brien's views on the outcome?
14. Describe King.
15. What is a motion case?

Name: _____

16. O'Brien needs to make Steve look like what? Why?
17. Describe the judge.
18. How does he feel about the case? How can you tell?
19. Who is Asa Briggs?
20. What does the conversation on p.18 mean to you?
21. What is a flashback?
22. Who is Mr. Sawicki?
23. Who does Petrocelli say is involved in the crime?
24. Who is Alquinado Nesbitt?
25. What was Steve's role in the crime according to Petrocelli?
26. What does O'Brien say is the beauty of the American justice system?
27. What were the long speeches by Petrocelli, O'Brien, and Briggs called?
28. Who is Jose Delgado?
29. Describe the events of the day from Delgado's point of view.
30. What is Riker's Island? Who is there?
31. What does Zinzi have to do with the case?
32. Why was he so nervous?(Why did he need to save himself?)
33. Why does Briggs attack Zinzi's character?
34. What does the flashback of Steve with Tony make you think about Steve?

PAGES 45-88

1. Why does Steve hate this place? Or, in other words, what do guys in prison talk about?
2. Who is Bolden? How is he connected to the crime? What info does he know?
3. What's the point of the flashback of King, Steve, Peaches, and Johnny?

Name: _____

4. Bolden wanted to do the right thing—or did he? Why would he roll over on King? Is he a reliable witness? Why? Why not?
5. What does Briggs say about Bolden?
6. What happens in Steve's cell?
7. Why include the flashback of Steve and Jerry?
8. Why doesn't Steve feel like he has a role? (p.59)
9. What's the point of the termite talk?
10. Who is Karyl?
11. What were the photos?
12. How did the cops trace info to the suspects?
13. Why do Williams and Karyl seem to have different views of Steve's outcomes?
14. Why might they talk about the death penalty in front of Steve?
15. What's the point of the scene between Steve and the older prisoners? What pieces of wisdom does the older prisoner give Steve when he says "I want a life, too"?
16. According to O'Brien, why is the prosecutor's job easier?
17. Do you think Freddy and Ozvaldo have the right view of Steve?
18. Why does Freddy think Steve hangs with bad guys?
19. Why does Ozvaldo say he was involved in the robbery? How do you know he is telling the truth or lying?
20. In your opinion, is Steve really guilty? Why/
21. In the eyes of the lay, is he guilty? Why?

PAGES 89-126

1. How long could Steve spend in jail? How old will he be when he is out, if he's given the maximum sentence?
2. Why do you think Steve thinks of his mom laying out clothes and working in the kitchen? Does he think about his parents much? Why? Why not?

Name: _____

3. Who is the real Steve Harmon (according to Steve himself)? P.92
4. What does the conversation on the top of p.94 suggest?
5. What does Steve learn on p.96?
6. How does Steve imagine the school kids view him?
7. What do the stage notes between the pretty black juror and Steve imply?
8. What does Ozvaldo say on stand? Who was involved?
9. What on p.102 makes Ozvaldo seem unintelligent?
10. What mistake does Ozvaldo make on p.106? How does it discredit what he said on p.104?
11. Ozvaldo said he participated in the robbery because he was scared of Bobo. What makes you not believe him?
12. Do you think Mr. Harmon thinks Steve is innocent or guilty? Why?
13. What dreams did Mr. Harmon have for Steve?
14. What does that scene suggest about Steve's home life? How do you imagine his life compared to the other people involved in the robbery?
15. Steve writes on p.115 that he, "didn't do nothing." What does that actually mean, grammatically speaking?
16. Steve overhears the women talking. About what? What news do they know?
17. When Steve hears the news he lets the basketball fall from his hands and takes off running. What does Steve's reaction make you think?
18. Describe the events that take place in Steve's neighborhood and how people must feel that live there.
19. Why might the newscast shock Steve, but not the other residents in the neighborhood?
20. Why do you think Steve looks away and not at his mother when he is escorted to the police station?
21. Have there been clues that Steve was expecting to get arrested? If so, what are they?

PAGES 127-200

1. What is the trick that Petrocelli uses? What effect does it have on the jurors?

Name: _____

2. The following line implies quite a bit. “I can see me at that moment, just when Mr. Nesbitt knew he was going to die, walking down the street trying to make my mind a blank screen” (128). Why does Steve try to make his mind a blank screen at the same moment Mr. Nesbitt is dying? What does this journal entry suggest?
3. How do the guys mopping all look alike? What does Steve realize at that same moment?
4. How did Sal Zinzi lead the cops to Richard “Bobo” Evans?
5. Medically speaking, how did Mr. Nesbitt die?
6. When the cause of Mr. Nesbitt’s death is detailed in court Steve and King both react. How do their reactions differ? What does this imply about both characters?
7. Why is Steve so afraid of staying in prison?
8. Do you believe Steve only went into the store to get mints like he writes on p.140, or do you think he is trying to convince himself he did nothing wrong? Why do you think what you think? Support your opinion.
9. Describe Ernie’s crime. Do you think he is guilty? Explain.
10. Why does it bother Steve so much when his mother leaves? Why might her comment bother Steve?
11. Why do you think Walter Dean Myers chooses to not show Steve’s answer in the flashback of King and Steve discussing the potential robbery of the drug store?
12. Why can’t Steve smile at people who smile at him in prison?
13. Why does Steve think there are so many fights in prison? Can you relate to that? Why or why not?
14. Why is it ironic that kids aren’t allowed in the visiting area?
15. What does a stenographer do?
16. Describe Lorelle Henry. Why is Lorelle Henry’s testimony bad for King?
17. Why does Briggs, King’s lawyer, discuss the police showing Mrs. Henry pictures?
18. What does Bobo say about Steve on p.175 that is bad for Steve?
19. What things has Bobo been arrested for before?

Name: _____

20. What did Bobo and King do after the robbery?
21. What was the sign Steve gave King and Bobo? How might this help O'Brien argue his case?
22. What does Bobo get for testifying against King and Steve?
23. Bobo says it is King's fault he is in the mess. What does Brigg's say about that?
24. Steve never got any money from the robbery. Why? What does Bobo say?

PAGES 201-238

1. Steve would tell Jerry, "Think about all the tomorrows of you life." (205). What does this mean? Why does he want to tell this to his little brother?
2. Who is Dorothy Moore?
3. What does Petrocelli imply about the lamp King gave his cousin?
4. What does Nipping testify about?
5. What does O'Brien say Steve needs to do?
6. Why can't King take the stand in his own defense?
7. What are the rules for the game O'Brien plays with Steve?
8. How would you describe the answers Steve gives that O'Brien seems to like?
9. The prisoners (VO) say there is no truth in prison. Instead, what is there?
10. On p.231, Steve says he didn't know where he was the day of the robbery. On page 128 he said where he was. What does do these contradictions mean?
11. How did Steve feel when he left the witness stand?
12. Describe Mr. Sawicki 's testimony.

PAGES 238-281

1. The beginning of Brigg's closing statement is to do what?
2. Who are the only people in the court room?

Name: _____

3. What is the second thing Briggs tries to say in his closing statement to defend King?
4. According to Briggs, what kind of people did Petrocelli use as her witnesses?
5. What is the “area of reasonable doubt”?
6. What does O’Brien say about the state’s argument on the bottom of p.245?
7. Why does O’Brien mention Lorelle Henry being in the store at the time of the robbery, again? (2 reasons)
8. What are two other reasons O’Brien says Steve wasn’t the lookout? (p.249)
9. What is Steve to Bobo?
10. O’Brien asks the jury to compare Steve to all the other people involved in the robbery or brought up to the witness stand. Do that. Compare him to those people.
11. What is the jury job when there is guilt? When there is no guilt *proven*?
12. What does Petrocelli say this case is about?
13. Why is Mr. Delgado’s testimony important?
14. Lorelle Henry’s testimony supported whose testimony?
15. Who are the three people that confirm King was at the store during the robbery?
16. The city clerk confirmed whose testimony?
17. Why does Petrocelli say Mrs. Henry is courageous?
18. All the confirmed testimonies help to prove which character guilty?
19. What doe Petrocelli say about Steve on p.262?
20. How do the guards tease King and Steve on p.265-6?
21. Why does Steve say guys talk about appeals?
22. Steve says he doesn’t want to think about decisions, just his case? Do you think this is a good idea, to not reflect on his decisions? Why or why not?
23. How is this not the episode that Steve expected? What did it do though? (p.275)

Name: _____

- 24. What is King's fate?
- 25. What is Steve's verdict?
- 26. What does O'Brien do to Steve right after the verdict is read?
- 27. Why does Steve make the videos?
- 28. What do you think O'Brien saw?

- 29. Pick three lessons you think a young teenager could learn from this book. List them below and explain how this book teaches those lessons.

Lesson 1: _____

This book teaches this lesson because...

Lesson 2: _____

This book teaches this lesson because...

Name: _____

Lesson 3: _____

This book teaches this lesson because...